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The A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT DID JESUS TEACH ABOUT DESTINY?.....158
BY REVEREND H. A. L. CLEMENT

WHAT DID JESUS TEACH CONCERNING HIMSELF?.....161
BY REVEREND H. A. L. CLEMENT

A STUDY OF I AND II KINGS.....162
BY DR. J. VAN CATLEDGE AND ALICE MARION PARKER

THE CONVERSION OF PAUL.....172
BY BENJAMIN ELTON COX

THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHURCH AND STATE.....178
BY REVEREND RUBEN L. SPEAKS

THE CHURCH:

EPISCOPAL ADDRESS, NEW JERSEY CONFERENCE.....195
BY BISHOP HERBERT BELL SHAW

SERMONIC LITERATURE:

MOTHER WALLS.....203
BY BISHOP STEPHEN HILL SPOTTSWOOD

B'NAI B'RITH.....209
BY REVEREND WILLIAM THOMAS KENNEDY

THE EDITORIALS.....214

IN AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS.....215

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A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review

WHAT DID JESUS TEACH ABOUT DESTINY?

by Rev. H. A. L. Clement,
Minister Mt. Zion Church, Montgomery, Ala.

The Kingdom of God is not defined anywhere in the teachings of Jesus, but no other phase of his teachings received as much publicity as the *Kingdom* did. Like John the Baptist he (Jesus) proclaimed the Kingdom that was at hand. By our Knowledge of Old Testament literature we know that the Hebrew people believed in and looked for the time to come that would end injustices and the wrongs of this life. They longed for the Kingdom to come where God would reign upon the throne. Unfortunate experiences in life developed a pessimism among these people and they lost hope for such a Kingdom on this earth. It appeared that the history was divided into two periods according to the Jewish viewpoint: (1) the present age in which we live, and (2) the age to come which would end all the existing evil, and give establishment to God's Kingdom. But these people were not certain whether this Kingdom was to be material and political, or moral and spiritual. At least it appeared that it would be "selfishly nationalistic and Jewish."

Some New Testament critics argued that Jesus held a similar view. Others held that he shared the apocalyptic idea, that he believed the day of God's rule was near at hand. "This generation shall not pass away till all things be accomplished" (Luke 12:32). The above views are not the main concern here because they offer interpretations to Jesus' thought. Our interest is to know what Jesus taught about the Kingdom through the original sources—the Synoptic Gospels.

Destiny for Jesus was a state where God dwelled and ruled as King. Yet, he is believed to have accepted the ideas held so long by his people—that God would govern the affairs of the world and change the conditions of things so that men would have no trouble in following his will. Jesus did not portray the pessimism of the apocalyptists in his ideas of the coming Kingdom. It was a place where good would be supreme.

To Jesus this destiny was a universal concern and he included the Samaritan woman to come along as well as the Gentiles. At this point he differed with his people. Perhaps their Kingdom never came because it was too narrow a concept, limiting its inhabitants by nationalists.

There were two theories about this Kingdom; and we must attempt to prove to which one Jesus held; the Kingdom on Earth, or the Kingdom of God to come. The Kingdom of the future is found in Luke (20: 34 and 35): "The children of this world . . . . But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world . . . . " He refers to to the eternal life which shall be given to the righteous in the world to come (Mark 10:30), and the judgment and also of the sin against the Holy Spirit which shall be forgiven neither in this world nor the world to come" (Matt. 12:32).

As for the Kingdom at hand Jesus words at the Last Supper come to mind: " . . . . . until that day . . . . . in the Kingdom of God" (Mark 14:25). In the Lord's Prayer Jesus taught his disciples to say: " . . . . . thy Kingdom come," which spoke of its time element. So it seems that the Teacher held to both views of the Kingdom of God; therefore he did not define it or limit it to this world but what was more important he lived as though he were already in it.

Jesus taught a personal immortality because his salvation was an individual matter: " . . . . . if *any* man will come after me . . . . . " (Luke 9: 23). No man can live for another; one is saved by his individual acceptance of the way of Jesus and fulfilling the will of God: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34.) In many phases of his teaching Jesus emphasized that you in the singular sense. Just as no man can live for you, neither can a man die for you. Each man lives and dies for himself. Jesus did not consider the world lost because there were so many opposed to the good. With emphasis on the individual soul there was hope, and he offered that regenerative power to that man willing to recognize God at work in the world: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20-21). The Kingdom is granted to the man that accepts God's way with a contrite heart.

Likewise immortality is more than individual or personal but social. It is personal as far as man must merit it through his individual deeds. But it is social wherein it is inherited by more than one. What makes a society is the coming together of two or more individuals sharing in common purposes: "and the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul . . . . . they had all things common" (Acts 4:32). Thus if only God and Jesus lived in the King-

dom it would be a social pattern. The Social Emphasis in immortality then, is, while the Kingdom is gained on individual living, more than one single individual will be living the good life to deserve entrance in it.

The Sermon on the Mount becomes a social document just as Jesus' other teachings. This being true then blessed are the meek, the peacemakers, and the pure in heart, and those persecuted for righteousness' sake for they shall be the Children of God. Instead, they shall be called the citizens of the Kingdom of God.

We wish to thank the many ministers who have either purchased copies of the History of the A. M. E. Zion Church Part I, 1796-1872, or have aided in their sale. Among these who have sold additional copies are: Dr. D. P. Thomas, Greater Walters Church, W. T. Beck, Blackwell (both of Chicago); C. W. Turns, Hood, Richmond; R. V. Walls, Oak Street, Petersburg; Bishop J. D. Cauthen, Norfolk; W. F. Moses, Gary, Indiana; T. J. Tipp, East Chicago; B. C. Robeson, Mother Zion Church; R. L. Speaks, Varick, Philadelphia; T. M. Poe, The Church on the Hill, New York; S. H. Williams, Ralph Ave., Brooklyn; Presiding Elder Tucker, New York Conference; R. W. Gullette, White Plains, New York; C. L. Wilcox, Mt. Vernon; W. M. Smith, Big Zion, Mobile; M. P. Sawyer, Trinity, Greensboro, N. C.; J. F. Dunn, St. John, Cincinnati; R. S. Lomax, Carlisle; E. R. Michael, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.; G. L. Blackwell, Hackensack; Miss Amelie Harris of the Foreign Missions office, J. A. Arnold, Bristol, Tenn.; E. Franklin Jackson, National Church of Zion Methodist, Washington, D. C.; A. W. Ricks, Little Rock, Arkansas.

In addition to the loyal support of the above, we have had the good fortune to have the aid of Bishops Walls and Spottswood who sold books in the following conferences when we were unable to be present, New England, Western New York, Ohio and Indiana. At the New Jersey and Philadelphia Conferences Bishops Shaw and Jones were marvelous in their support of the venture. We closed the Spring Conference time needing the additional sale of 300 copies to complete the publisher's bill for printing. We are urging those who have accounts outstanding or who owe for copies to let us hear from you at once.

WHAT DID JESUS TEACH CONCERNING HIMSELF?

by Rev. H. A. L. Clement, Minister of Mt. Zion Church, Montgomery, Ala.

Though Jesus' main teaching was showing man the way to God, he did teach something regarding his nature. But he says very little concerning himself, and what he mentions comes near the end of his public ministry. However, he informs his listeners of his Sonship which does appear at an early age. (Perhaps the earliest information about his nature and the only phase about himself constantly appearing throughout the record.) In his boyhood he declared this relationship with God: " . . . . wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49, see all vv. 41-52). Throughout his earthly life he recognized the Father-Son relationship between God and him. It is present at the time of his baptism: "Thou are my beloved Son." On the night of his betrayal he struggles in prayer in the garden, "With its loyalty and trust, is summed up in the wards, 'Abba, Father' ". On the cross he confirms to the end this Sonship as he prays forgiveness upon his wrongdoers. Through the intimate personal contact which Jesus possessed with God gave him claim of the Sonship. God and Jesus had a "unity of spirit." He and the Father are one.

A second factor in the teaching of Jesus was the "Messiahship". He may have been hesitant to proclaim himself as Messiah, Savior, and Lord nevertheless he rose to fill such a position. As we search the records in the Gospels we cannot deny him the place so rightfully his—no matter how we may interpret it. Jesus realized that his mission on earth was not so much to teach about himself in words but rather that of saving and serving men.. Thus he said: "If I am the Son of God, then I must obey and serve and suffer." He had already begun teaching the law of service and his death for men when the disciples called him Messiah. (Matthew 23:8-10) brings to light the incident of Jesus declaring his own authority as teacher. Many recognized him as a teacher even the Pharisees that criticized his method. Nicodemus comes to him to sanction this truth and many others called him, "Rabbi".

A STUDY OF I AND II KINGS

Dr. J. Van Catledge, Editor of Church School Literature, and

Alice Marion Parker

These first two chapters form one section. They were originally the continuation of II Sam. 9-20, but were detached so as to provide a suitable introduction to the story of Solomon's reign. They are thoroughly lively in style and well written. The author evidently had access to firsthand information of the inner life of the court with its plots and counterplots. So clearly is this the case that we may safely assume that he used a court narrative as his source. Nothing of these two chapters is found in Chronicles. Presumably the Chronicles did not wish to perpetuate the memory of any suggestions of difficulty or doubt concerning Solomon's accession to the throne.

The Deuteronomic editor has interpolated two short passages into this court story: 2:2b-4, 10-12. The first of these represents a death-bed charge to his successors, and it is couched in languages which bears an unmistakable Deuteronomic character in every phrase. The second passage contains the obituary notice by the editor, together with the usual information concerning the new king. It may well be that 2:27, also is due to the Deuteronomic editor since it depends upon I Sam. 2:27-36, a passage which he largely rewrote in his own words.

A. Rivals For The Throne (1:1-53)

It is evident that according to popular expectation Adonijah was the legitimate heir. He was the eldest surviving son, and while this in itself by no means settled the matter his claim was supported by the great majority of the court party, including Abiathar and Joab, the two men who had mostly been loyal to David through the years and most intimate in his first place by Nathan the prophet and Bathsheba, Solomon's mother—the woman who had originally been the wife of Uriah the Hittite. The most that can be said for their nominee is that David may have made a secret promise to the mother that Solomon should succeed to the throne. Even of this there is legitimate doubt, and it is most likely that Bathsheba's statement in vs. 13, was a deliberate fabrication invented to impose upon the aged king. The position of queen mother was one of considerable prestige and influence, and was well worthy of the efforts of an ambitious woman (cf. 15:13.)

1. David's Incapacity

1:1-4. David aged now approximately seventy years, has become impotent. Every step is taken to rejuvenate him, but without avail. He therefore must cease to be king, and make way for a successor.

Most commentators take these verses to refer to the collapse of the aged king's strength through senile decay. It is assumed that it was a general loss of bodily vigor which led to the necessity for his abdication. But these verses are most valuable in that they provide evidence of "the hole of the pit" whence Israel was dug. They show that in the early days Hebrews had ideas in common with the people by whom they were surrounded. Just as David thought that he could not worship Israel's God except on Israel's soil (I Sam. 26:19 cf. II Kings 5:17-18), so it was believed that the fertility of the soil and the general prosperity of the people were bound up with the fertility of the king. David by this time is old and decrepit and his sexual vigor is in question. Attempts are made to remedy the situation, the first cure is to heap clothes upon the bed in order to secure such physical heat as might render him capable. When this fails a search is made for the most beautiful woman in the land. Great emphasis is placed on her charms. The LXX chapter supports this by translating in vs. 2, "and let her excite him and lie with him." The fact that the king had intercourse with her is decisive in the story and not a mere interesting addendum. If David was impotent he could no longer be king. Further, there is no point in the story of 2:12:25 unless Abishag the Shunamite had been more than an old man's nurse. She must have been reckoned as David's wife or Solomon would never have interpreted Adonijah's request as a bid for the throne. Also, why should a king be expected to abdicate because he cannot keep warm in bed even clothes are piled upon him?

This explanation, dependent upon the necessity of the physical vigor of the king, is in line with the ideas of primitive peoples generally and indeed finds present-day support in the Near East. There was an occasion when the authority of Ibn Saud over his Arabs actually depended on such a factor. A number of instances have been collected by James G. Frazer of the killing of the king when his bodily vigor fails, for "the fertility of men, of cattle, and of the crops is believed to depend sympathetically on the generative power of the king." There is no need to assume the existence in Israel of the ritual of the sacred marriage, annually performed in the Mesopotamian cults, since

it is clear from the story that the search for ravishing young woman is exceptional. It is possible, nevertheless, to see in her some evidence of primitive ideas among the Hebrews at the beginning of the first millennium b. c.

2. Adonijah Is Proclaimed King

Adonijah had already taken steps to forward his claim to the throne by providing himself with chariot and charioteers, together with fifty outrunners to run in front of his chariot. This conduct was closely similar to that of Absalom when he had sought to establish his claim to the throne. David allowed Absalom to do this for four years, and he similarly acquiesced in Adonijah's conduct. It is to resist the conclusion that David did regard Absalom as his heir until the latter's death, and that later this choice was transferred to Adonijah. Two additional reasons for his suitability as heir are given in vs. 6. He was the eldest surviving son, and a very handsome man. Evidently both Absalom and Adonijah had their father's good looks and attractive ways. Adonijah and his friends held a sacrificial feast, at which apparently Adonijah was proclaimed kind.

Joab was David's nephew, being a son of David's sister, Zeruiah. He was also David's "captain of the host," commander of the militia, the army in the field which consisted of every able-bodied man called up for the campaign. The small standing army was under the command of Benaiah, captain of the king's bodyguard of foreign mercenaries. Thus Adonijah had no armed force to support his claim at short notice whereas Solomon had a body of disciplined seasoned troops at his immediate call under the command of Benaiah. This was the decisive factor when the time came for action.

Abiathar the priest was the sole survivor of the massacre by Saul of the house of Eli, the hereditary priests of the ark of Shiloh from the beginning. He shared all David's early vicissitudes, and when David came to his kingdom was installed as copriest with Zadok. This Zadok was probably of the original Jebusite priesthood of Jerusalem. His descendants were priests who were called "the priests the sons of Aaron," two thirds of them were Zadokites (I Chr. 24:4).

Nathan the prophet had considerable influence at court. He had been in a sufficiently strong position to prevent David from building the temple and to reprove him in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. He had been particularly interested in Solomon from babyhood and it was through Nathan that the child was called Jedidiah, "Beloved of Yah."

It will be seen that Solomon actually had the backing of those who had grown to be strong at court during David's reign, rather than of those who had been David's early comrades.

The coronation feast was celebrated hard by the sacred spring of En-rogel. This is probably Job's Well, and not the modern Virgin's Spring, which was Gihon, where Solomon's coronation feast was held. Gihon was nearer the city, out of sight from Job's Well, though not out of hearing.

3. *The Plot in Favor of Solomon*

Nathan and Bathsheba hatch a plot to supersede the generally expected heir in favor of the younger Solomon. It may be asked whether they were reminding David of an ancient promise or were inventing the whole story and palming it off for true on the aged king.

The success of Adonijah would certainly involve the execution, sooner or later, of the rival claimant and his known supporters. In the end both Adonijah and Joab lost their lives, and this would have been Abiathar's fate also had he not been a priest and therefore inviolate as a sacred person.

4. *Bathsheba Before David*

The two conspirators begin to put their plans into practice with Bathsheba making the first approach. She alleges that David has made a promise in respect of her son Solomon, tells him that Adonijah has already been made king, asks the king to declare his promise publicly, because it is a matter of life and death for her and her son.

Sleeps with his fathers: This phrase is in line with the earliest Hebrew ideas of what happens after death. The idea of Sheol is a later development, "Sheol is the land of ghosts, ... weak and helpless, with no life after death. That came "primarily of the later growth of a belief in a resurrected life after death. The only passages which by common agreement refer to life beyond the grave are Isa. 26:19 and Dan. 12:2.

Counted offenders.: The Hebrew is usually translated "sinners." Both the KJV and the RSV are interpreting, neither quite adequately. Early Hebrew ideas of sin, before the rise of the eighth-century prophets, were practical rather than ethical. Here the word has no ethical significance, but means that they will find themselves on the losing side, suffering the death penalty for having supported the unsuccessful aspirant; cf. Gen. 43:9, where the KJV rightly has "let me bear the

blame for ever," but the Hebrews is, "Then will I be a sinner to thee all my days." A similar example is Exod. 9:27, where Pharoh says, "The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked," the meaning being that God has won and Pharaoh has lost. There is no question here of ethics. The rightness of the action is judged solely by the consequences, not by any preconceived moral code. This judgment by results needs to be remembered generally in connection with the words for "sin" and the doctrine of Atonement. The words can be used, and are often used, not only for the wrong act itself, but also for the consequences of it in suffering, condemnation, and death.

5. *Adonijah's Cause Collapses*

The bad news of what has been happening at Gihon soon reaches Adonijah and his supporters at En-rogel. The movement forthwith collapses and every man flees for his life. Adonijah himself seeks sanctuary and his life is spared conditionally upon his future good behavior.

Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest shares with Ahimaaz son of Zadok the other priest the reputation of being a long-distance runner. They both appear in the stories of David's reign as runners of repute.

The horns of the altar: These are originally bull's horns and represented the strength of deity. They were the most sacred parts of the altar. Here Hebrew ideas once more are in line with heathen custom generally. There were bronze horns on the top of the ziggurat of Babylon, and also on that at Nineveh. All primitive altars had horns though in many Palestinian altars which have been excavated the horns have been formalized into knobs.

6. *The Elisha Narrative* (I King 22:41-II Kings 8:29)

Jehoshaphat of Judah

The major events of the reign of Jehoshaphat have already been mentioned in the story of Ahab and Ramoth-gilead. This fact was due to the custom of the Deuteronomic editor who deals wholly with the life of one king before he turns back to the reign of the kings who have meanwhile succeeded in the other kingdom. Most of these verses are from the hand of the editor and contain the usual introductory and obituary notices proper to a king of Judah. Vss. 46-49 are from the annals. From them we learn that Edom was vassal to Jehoshaphat, and that a disastrous attempt was made to open up once again that foreign trade with the East, based at Ezion-geber at the

head of the Gulf of Aqabah which had brought great profit and luxury to Solomon. These verses are found in the LXX MSS, except in Codex A. The reference there, however, is to one ship only. The statement in the M. T. that the deputy was king in Edom, following immediately after the statement that there was no king, is strange though intelligible. It can be taken to mean that there was no native Edomite king reigning, but that Jehoshaphat's deputy reigned in his stead.

The chapter concludes with the formal Deuteronomic introduction of the reign of Ahaziah of Israel. The story of Ahaziah is carried on in an excerpt form the prophetic tales of the north.

II Kings

A fuller account of Jehoram s abortive attempt to reconquer Moab is to be found in 3:4-27—a story taken from a source akin to to that of I Kings 22:1-37. All these stories portray an interest in the north not shared by the 610 BC. compiler. According to the Moabite stone, Moah revolted from Israelite suzerainty during the time of Omri's son, but Ahaziah's reign was so short that the variation is of no great account.

Ahaziah falls through a lattice in the upper chamber of his palace and receives severe injuries. He sends to the shrine at Ekron to inquire whether he will recover. The messengers are met by Elijah, who is full of wrath because the king has sent to this heathen shrine and not to the Lord. Elijah resists capture at the hands of bodies of troops sent to arrest him, and finally goes to the king and foretells his death. This doom is fulfilled, and the chapter concludes with a Deuteronomic obituary notice and a formal note of the name of the successor.

The 'aliyyah was normally a roof chamber, built over the city gateway or on the corner of the house roof, usually with access by a stairway from the street. Josephus is thinking in terms of some such roof chamber when he says that Abaziah fell as he was coming down from the top of his house. Probably Ahaziah's chamber was more in terms of the "wide and spacious roof chambers" of which Jeremiah speaks, with windows cut out. Furthermore, these eastern windows were for letting in the air. Ahaizah fell through the protective latticework of one of these open windows spaces in his spacious roof chamber.

He sent messengers to "seek an oracle" or inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron. This was no "obscure local deity," as some com-

mentators have said, but a localized form of the great Baal of Syria, the weather-god identified with Hadad, and also locally identified with Baal-Melkart, tutelary god of Tyre. He is the Baal of the Ras Shamra tablets. The name Baal-zebub means "Lord of flies." It was formerly the custom of commentators to compare him and even to identify him with the Greek god Zenus Apomuios—i. e., Zeus the averter of flies as a god who possessed the special power of destroying this Eastern pest. The name Baal-zebub has been found in the Ras Shamra tablets in the form Zbl-b'l. In one text he is equated with "the rider of the clouds", or again he is Aliyan-Baal, the god who controls the springs, wells and watercourses, and comes to life again from his dwelling in the earth. He is thus the life-god of Syria, and Elijah is protesting against precisely the same syncretism on the part of Ahaziah as he had done in the case of Ahab his father on Mount Carmel. On the former occasion at Carmel it was a choice between Baal-Melkart and the Lord. It will be seen that the Greek N. T. is thus correct at Matt. 10:25 and elsewhere in reading Beelzeboul, and that some English versions are wrong in assimilating their spelling there to the deliberately erroneous spelling of this verse in II Kings 1:2.

Ekron was one of the five cities of the Philistines. It was about fifteen miles south of the modern Jaffa, and was therefore, the most easily accessible of the five to any traveler from Israel.

The Small Boys and the She-Bears

The story of the small boys who were rude to the prophet has been subjected to various explanations by commentators who have hoped to make it acceptable to proper standards of justice and fairness. It is merely an example of premoral exhortation to respect the prophets as the holy men of God. The story compares most unfavorably with N. T. teaching and indeed will not stand examination from any moral point of view.

Baldness was reckoned to be a disgrace in ancient times. The word baldhead was a term of reproach among both the Greeks and the Romans.

Jehoram's Moabite Campaign

These verses contain the formal Deuteronomic introduction to the reign of King Jehoram of Israel, and they come from the 610 B.C. complier.

The M.T. reads "put away the pillar of Baal", but the ancient versions read "pillars." It is commonly said that Jehoram's reforms could not have done as he did in 10:18-27. Apparently there was still one pillar in the Baal temple which Jehu destroyed. Some hold, however, that this reference is an insertion but there is no real justification for the suggestion. It is true that in vs. 13 Elisha rebuked Jehoram because of Ahab and Jezebel, but elsewhere the prophet is kindly disposed to the young king. It is therefore more than probable that the king did actually take steps to reform the cultus, in spite of the fact that his mother Jezebel was still alive and presumably had still some considerable influence. The Deuteronomic verdict is that he did not follow Baal as his parents did. In view of the later story of Jehu's activity we must assume that the young king was partially successful in his reforming zeal, but that he was not able wholly to extirpate Baal from the land.

Moab revolts from Israel at the death of Ahab. Ahaziah dies before he can take any action, so his brother Jehoram finds it incumbent upon him to restore the situation. Jehoram commands his vassal Jehoshaphat. The three kings seek to attach Moab through the Edomite country, but after seven days they are faced with an utter lack of water. The three kings go to seek advice from Elisha, who at first spurns the Israelite king, bidding him to go to the prophets of his parents, but he later suggests a stratagem by which Moab is deceived into making a disorderly advance. As a result, the Moabites are driven back in confusion, their country destroyed, their cities taken, until the king of Moab finds himself driven to make a desperate sally with seven hundred swordsmen. The despairing effort fails, so he sacrifices his eldest son, the heir to the throne, on the city wall. This sacrifice is so effective that Israel is driven back in confusion, and Moab retains her independence.

Mesha was a noqedh, and owner of that breed of sheep which the Arabs call naqad. They are small, unprepossessing in appearance ("viler than a naqad" is a term of reproach), but giving wool of a good quality. Amos was a keeper of such sheep (Amos 1:1).

The M.T. reads "he used to deliver", to which the Targ, inserts, annually. The numbers seem somewhat excessive for an annual tribute even though Moab was famous as a pastoral country. The LXX therefore infers that it was a single payment paid as an indemnity in the rebellion.

Amaziah Challenges Jehoash

Amaziah is so encouraged by his success over Edom that he seeks to measure his strength against Israel, to whom Jedah has been tributary ever since before the days of Ahab. The result is disastrous in the extreme. Amaziah did not manage even to invade Israelite territory. The armies met at Beth-shemesh, some fifteen miles west of Jerusalem, and Amaziah lost everything. The king of Israel even tore down the wall of Jerusalem for some two hundred years.

When Amaziah challenged Jehoash the Israelite king told him a parable about a thistle, a cedar, and a wild beast. This is what happens to little thistles which set themselves up as being equal to cedars. Since the story is parable and not an allegory there is no need to seek to identify the wild beast.

Death of Jehoash

The statement of vs. 17 is a later insertion possibly made in order to separate the two death notices. It is based on the statements of 13:10 and 14:2. Amaziah probably survived Jehoash by seven years. The usual obituary notice for king of Judah has had to be modified in the case of Amaziah because of the unusual circumstances of the king's death. We have therefore the customary mention of the source in which further details can be found, but to this is added an extract from the way in which his son was installed as his successor. It appears that when the king heard of the plot he fled toward Egypt but was overtaken at Lachish and there killed. Lachish was the second largest city of Judah, about thirty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem.

Nergal was the god of Kutu. He was the deity of the underworld and in the Mesopotamian astral system was identified with the planet Mars. His special day was the twenty-eighth of the month, the "day of the ravishment of the moon-god", because on this day there was no moon, and Sin, the moon-god, was regarded as having entered the land of the dead. It is on record that when Tiglath-pileser was in Babylonia in 729 B.C. he offered sacrifice to the great gods of Babylonia, of whom Nergal at Kutu was one.

The name Ashima has been found in a compound name in the Elephantine papyri. She was apparently worshiped there as the secondary wife of Yahu. It is probable that the name Ashima should be read in Amos 8:14 for 'ashmath, and then translated "swear by Ashima of Samaria."

The two names Mibhaz and Tartak are wholly unknown, and the words themselves are actually uncertain. Jewish tradition says that one deity was worshiped under the guise of a dog's head, the other under the guise of an ass, but such statements are untrustworthy since the Jews were notoriously abusive when they referred to heathen deities.

The book of the law: It will never be decided whether Hilkiah really found the scroll or whether he knew very well where to look. The general agreement is that the scroll contained the nucleus of the present book of Deuteronomy, probably chs. 12-26.

Execution of the leaders: These were the men who had been responsible for the revolt. The Babylonians might not be able to stop another revolt, though they intended to do their best, but they certainly made sure that these men could not lead a second one. According to Jer. 52:25 there were seven, not five.

The Hopeful Ending

In the spring of 561 B.C. Jehoiachin, after thirty-seven years of captivity, found himself restored to a position of favor. He was not permitted to return home to Palestine but he did get a measure of preferment. Nebuchadrezzar had died in 562 B.C. and the new king Amel-Marduk changed his father's policy with respect to the captive king.

The phrase lift up the head is similarly used in Gen. 40:13 for describing release from actual prison.

The custom of eating at the king's table is a high honor.

A number of cuneiform tablets have been recovered from a chamber in the northeast corner of Nebuchadrezzar's southern fort, beneath the ground floor of the palace. Four of these refer to provisions which were supplied to Jehoiachin and his fellow prisoners. They belong to the period 594-569 B.C. so that the last of them is at least eight years earlier than the time of Jehoiachin's good fortune. It is evident therefore that Evil-merodach increased the king's allowance from the meager amount recorded in the tablets.

The book of Kings ends on a note of hope. It is not the triumphant expectation of the earlier compiler of 610 B.C., the man who conceived the work itself, but it provided a ground of confidence in God's future redemption, the groundwork on which Second Isaiah and Ezekiel are built, and out of which there grew the restored community of postexilic days.

THE CONVERSION OF PAUL

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Paul was a native of Tarsus, a city important both as a commercial center and as a seat of a famous university. He was of pure Israelite descent and proud of it. At the same time he was by birth a Roman citizen and as Tarsus did not possess the civitas, the probability is that his father had obtained the citizenship as a freedman client of some Roman family, possibly the Aemilian house of which "Paul," adopted by Saul as his second name, was a cognomen. The family had some distinction and probably fairly well-to-do. By education and upbringing Saul would certainly be bilingual. It is likely that he was first educated at the university in Tarsus, but it is doubtful whether he would be allowed to absorb much purely Greek culture; for later he was sent to study at Jerusalem in the schools of the rabbis, about whom Josephus says that "the only wisdom they prize is a knowledge of our laws and the correct interpretation of the Scriptures." Definite allusions by Paul to classical writers are found in the speeches of Acts and in passages in the epistles of doubtful authenticity. [1] In Jerusalem his chief mentor was Gamaliel, by whom he was "educated according to the strict manner of the law," though, to judge by Gamaliel's attitude to the Christians in Acts 5:34ff. the teacher could have been marked by little of his pupil's fanaticism. Saul, like Stephen, should probably be ranked as a "Hellenist" Jew, for the accusers of Stephen appear to have been chiefly "Hellenists," and if we are right in identifying Saul closely with them as a member of the synagogue of "those from Cilicia and Asia," the inference is that he too belonged to the same class. But he was certainly an "orthodox" rather than a "liberal" Hellenist. His dual character as a Jew speaking the language of Jerusalem and a Roman citizen speaking fluent Greek perfectly fitted him to act as the great missionary mediator between Israel and the empire. [2]

His mission to Damascus was to arrest the disciples of Jesus there, and bring them to Jerusalem for trial and punishment. On the way he was arrested by a miracle, converted by receiving knowledge of the truth; was consecrated by Ananias; and after his recovery from the

1 The Interpreter's Bible, **Acts.** p. 118.
2 Ibid., page 119.

temporary blindness, began his work for the new cause, in the synogogue at Damascus, by preaching Jesus the Christ to the Jews, and Jesus the Son of God to the Gentiles. [3]

But Saul, breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging in the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he journeyed he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him. And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" And he said, "Who are you Lord? And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting; but rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. Saul arose from the ground; and when his eyes were opened, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias," and he said, "Here I am, Lord." And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for a man of Tarsus named Saul; for behold, he is praying, and he has seen a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon thy name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized, and took food and was strengthened. For several days he was with with the disciples at Damascus. [4]

As I made my journey and drew near to Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone about me. And I fell to

3 Smith Bible Dictionary, **Paul.** page 236.
4 Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible, **Acts 9:1-19.** pages 143-44.

the ground and heard a voice saying to me, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" And I answered, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said to me, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting." Now those who were with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. And I said, "What shall I do, Lord?" And the Lord said to me, "Rise, and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all that is appointed for you to do." And when I could not see because of the brightness of the light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, came to me, and standing by me said to me, "Brother Saul, receive your sight." And in that very hour I received my sight and saw him. And he said, "The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Just One and to hear a voice from his mouth; for you will be a witness for him to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name." [5]

> " . . . I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. At midday, O King, I say on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the noonday sun, shining round me and those who journeyed with me. And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It hurts you to kick against the goads.' And I said, 'who are you, Lord?' And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand upon your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things in in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles—to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me'." [6]

The conversion of Saul (A. D. 34) along the sandy, sunbaked road on the outskirts of Damascus was a physical, mental, moral, and spiritual experience which revolutioned his intellectual life, redefined his religious objectives, and turned the vigorous prosecutor of Chris-

5 Ibid., 22:6-16. pages 160-61.
6 Ibid., 26:12-18. page 165.

tianity into its most ardent promoter. [7] To Paul, as to many of like temperament, Christ came not as a result of a long educational process, but as in a thunderstorm. The result in Paul's case was an immediate about-face. [8]

No doubt it took time for all the implications of the Damascus Road experience to become clear to him; but we may safely say that for Paul it brought four decisive consequences. To begin, it meant that Christ was incontrovertibly alive—alive by the power of God, who through the resurrection had set his seal on the work of the cross. Second, the cross itself, which had been for Paul, the persecutor, the sign of God's curse, because for him the supreme proof of God's love. Third, Paul knew that "salvation is the Lord"—that it begins on the divine side with an act of pure grace which man has done nothing to deserve. Paul saw not only the living Christ but "the vision of a waiting world" and of himself as God's apostle—his chosen envoy—to it. [9]

Along the road from Jerusalem to Damascus moves a man with a purpose. Suddenly a great light shines from heaven and a voice speaks. The man is stunned and blinded by the light and rises to his feet to finish his journey. His purpose, so dramatically interrupted, is completely and forever abandoned, and the man is a different man from head to foot. Such as the bare facts of one of the most decisive encounters that ever took place. The man was Paul the apostle. The light and the voice were the manifestations of the risen Christ. The purpose abandoned was the extinction of the Christian church, and the life task undertaken was to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. The first is its suddenness. Trained in the modern scientific school of thought, and breathing the atmosphere that the scientists have created, modern men are indoctrinated with the idea of gradual growth. One thing leads to another as surely as one link in a chain leads to another link. It is impossible for the modern man to think in terms of the purely miraculous. For him plants do not bloom overnight. . . this encounter between Paul and Christ did not come like a bolt from from the blue. By and large, things do not happen in life without due preparation, either open or secret. Paul did not see Jesus but he was reflected in the lives of his followers. Paul had wanted to make something out of his life. Perchance this job he was to do bothered him within, and a change was decided. The second hurdle for inter-

7 Harper's Bible Dictionary, Paul. page 530.
8 Ibid., page 531.
9 Hunter, A. M. Interpreting Paul's Gospel. pages 19-20.

preters today is the supernatural nature of the experience that Paul had on the Damascus Road. Visions and voices are suspected by men and women today, and people who see them and hear them are even more open to suspicion. The experience is doubted by many persons. It is agreed that Paul had an inner conflict—then a change was made. Paul had always been a religious man, but religion had been the religion of his fathers. Some people might ask why it was so long before Paul saw the light, why he held out against Jesus so stubbornly. There are two factors which might have blinded Paul to Christ. First, his predisposition in favor of Judaism. By birth, by training, and by habit he was predisposed to religion by restraint. But there was another factor that blinded Paul to Christ—his preconception of Jesus. From Paul's legal point of view Jesus was a moral anarchist, and Paul's mind was made up from the beginning that Jesus was the arch-enemy of Jewish religion.

These two factors were overcome in Paul's case by two unanswerable arguments. The first was the death of Stephen. Paul saw a young man die, and he heard him as he died ask forgiveness for the raging mob. Paul did not speak of it at the time, but it left an indelible impression upon his sensitive mind. It dawned upon Paul that Jesus was the truth. All the unmanageable pieces of the puzzle fell miraculously into place. He had been looking at Jesus, but now he saw him. Jesus took hold of him and never let him go. More and more, little by little, men of our day are seeing the same thing in their own idiom and according to their own pattern of thought. It is dawning upon man that this is one world, that it lives by God's power and that it is a family, that in Christ the family finds its healing principles and power, and that "we must love one another or die." That is the modern road to Damascus, and those who travel it sincerely are beginning to walk in the newness of life. [10]

Therefore, after due research on Paul's conversion the writer comes to the conclusion that Paul had previous thoughts befitting his personality. The moments that satisfied his inner self and what he saw happen to others who followed the "new way" helped him find Christ. The Damascus experience was a vision and a change of heart from his destroying to building up for Christ. The writer thinks that

10 Ibid., The Interpreter's Bible. pages 117-121.

emotions were in action when the convension accounts were told by Paul to convince others of the spirit of Christ and to give authority to his status in making Christians out of those who would give an ear to the good news.

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The A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review congratulates the Reverend George M. Oliver as the Minister of the Quarter. The Reverend Mr. Oliver pastors St. Paul A. M. E. Zion Church, Toledo, Ohio, where he has been located for the past several years. This past Spring Dr. Oliver and his congregation began worshipping in a beautiful gothic edifice which easily can be said to be the finest structure in the Michigan Conference. The extraordinary element of this move is that Dr. Oliver has maintained over the years agressive leadership and a daringness unsurpassed in the denomination. In truth, it is extremely remarkable that this minister who could easily rest upon his past achievenments, continues to point the way to strong Christian leadership even where men much younger than he, are concerned.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHURCH AND STATE

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Introduction

The relationship of church and state is an enduring problem that must be solved anew by each generation. It is one of great and enduring significance. The nature of our whole culture will depend upon how we solve this problem. It is one that demands more than an academic solution. Any successful solution must be concrete, practical and realistic. It must be one of the market place as well as of the ivory tower. It must take into consideration the divine will and purpose of God; human needs, human aspirations, and human culture.

As we approach this problem we must remember that there is no one solution that will fit all conditions. The relationship of church and state will depend, to a great extent, upon the kind of civilization and the kind of state in which the church finds itself.

In this article, we shall approach the problem in the light of Western Civilization. Its philosophies, ideals and principles shall be our major concern. In such a vast subject it is easy for one to become "bogged down" in details. In order to avoid this handicap we shall attempt to deal with the basic principles that govern the relationship of the two institutions.

Western Civilization—Its Nature and Composition

Before we enter into our discussion it is well that we define what we mean by Western Civilization. It is a term used to describe a particular way of life, a philosophy of society and a view of man. It is a way of looking at man in his relationship to God, nature and his fellowmen. Western civilization is composed of diverse elements. It is a flowing stream of age old traditions seeking fusion and cohesion in a new cultural synthesis. The three major streams of Western culture are: The Hebrew-Christian tradition, The Greek metaphysical tradition and the Latin-Anglo-Saxon tradition. As one observes the Western scene he realizes that although these traditions have mingled they have remained to a great extent unmixed, that is they have not found fusion in a new synthesis.

This lack of a complete synthesis on the part of Western civilization is due primarily to the irreconcilable nature of these varying tra-

ditions. Time and space will not permit a lengthy discussion of this point. One example is sufficient to emphasize what we mean. Let us take the idea of God. The concept of God in Western civilization is derived from the Greek metaphysical tradition on the one hand and the Hebrew-Christian tradition on the other. The Greek concept of God found its clearest and highest definition in the metaphysics of Aristotle. Here God is utterly transcendent, passionless, impersonal and entirely separated from His world.

In the Hebrew-Christian tradition the concept of God finds its clearest expression in the writings of the Eighth Century prophets and in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Here God is anthropomorphic, personal, compassionate and loving. It does not take much imagination to see the irreconcilable nature of these two ideas of Deity. This is only one example of the intra-contradictions of Western civilization. This weakness, however, is its strength. It is this lack of solidarity that accounts for much of the dynamics of Western civilization. It is this fluid state of affairs that has kept Western civilization from becoming static. A philosophy of church and state that does not take into consideration the nature of Western culture is fore-doomed to failure.

The State—Its Nature and Function

The concept of the state in Western civilization has always been different from that of the Greek and Oriental world. It is a blending of three irreconcilable philosophies. It is an effort to synthetize the Hebrew, Greek and Anglo-Saxon concept of organized society.

In Christian civilization as a whole there are three basic concepts of the state. They are as follows: I—That the state exists for God, it is ordained of God to perform a divine purpose. Its destruction or preservation should be left entirely to God. 2—That the state is an end in itself; that it is the supreme value. Everything exists for it, therefore it can do no wrong. 3.—That the state exists for the people. It is of the people, by the people and for the people. When it fails to serve the good of the people it should no longer exist. The people have the right to change the nature of the state to satisfy their own needs.

In Western civilization we find a fusion of these three basic ideas. In America we have been inclined to look upon the state as an instrument of the people, subject to the will of the people. We have assumed that the state has no reason for existence other than to serve the people. The concept of a democratic state is based upon the "social contract"

theory. In recent years, however, there has been a tendency to look upon the state as an end in itself. There is a possibility that the America of the future will repudiate the philosophy of the state propounded by the founding fathers.

Some Christian Conceptions of the State:

Before we discuss the function of the state in human culture it is well that we consider some of the basic Christian conceptions of the state. These Christian conceptions of the state may be divided as follows: The pre-Constantine, the post-Constantine and the Protestant conception.

Before the era of Constantine Christianity looked upon the state as being essentially evil. The state was an instrument of this world. Being under the reign of Satan this world is essentially evil. The state being an instrument of this world is therefore opposed to the Christian faith. The early Christian could take either of the two following alternatives: He could tolerate the state as a necessary evil or could seek to withdraw from the state and attempt to form a new society. As we study pre-Constantine Christianity we find both of these tendencies. There were many Christians who were indifferent to the state. They were content to endure its persecution and suffer its afflictions until the return of the Lord. They expected the day of the Lord to come shortly and destroy all of the evil of this world. Also there were those who sought to withdraw from the state and form a new society, a community of believers.

Concerning pre-Constantine Christianity, Troeltsch says, "In studying the relations between church and state it is possible to go along two lines. We can inquire how far the fundamental theory of of social behavior and feeling, as Christianity has evolved it in reference to the religious object, as possibly, consciously or unconsciously carried over into other social types? To what extent Christian individualism has awakened the sentiments of freedom and equality, and self respect in the state, in society, in the community, and in the family? And also how far its universalism of love has also introduced Christian patriarchal sentiments into other relationships . . . . . .

All that can be said is that the old sociological fundamental theories which had grown up in the city-state and in a militarist atmosphere were broken up by it and that the ancient conception of the state was destroyed."

In pre-Constantine Christianity we find the church opposing the state and seeking to destroy the very foundation upon which it is built.

In fairness to the early Christian view one must mention the Pauline concept of the state. Being a citizen of the Roman Empire and a a recipient of many of its benefits, the Apostle Paul never took a hostile view of the state. He looked upon the state as being ordained of God. We see that even at this early date there are two opposing philosophies of the state existing within the Christian community. Concerning these philosophies, Troeltsch says, "Thus in the early church we can only look for a theoretical adjustment of the relationship between the church and the kingdom of God on the one hand and the state and the world on the other, as of two inwardly essentially separate magnitudes which, owing to the existence of this essential separation, are prevented from mutual interpretation. As we have already seen clearly at various points, this problem had now become a peculiar dual problem: on the one hand, there is a widespread acceptance of the world and its institutions, in accordance with the fundamental principles laid down by Paul, and, on the other hand, the rejection of the world and of the state, on principle, as the fruit of sin and of the demonic realm. The ruling idea which lies behind this is that the state and the social order in general actually constitute the world."

This dualistic attitude toward the world characterized the thinking of the early church and was destined in the future to mark the characteristic distinction between the "church type" and the "sect type" Christianity.

The post-Constantine philosophy of the state that prevailed within the church was that propounded by St. Paul. The state was looked upon as being ordained of God. During this period the church accepted the world and its institutions. This acceptance took the form of a synthesis of church and society. In this synthesis the church held one of the three positions. Either the state was accepted as the master of the church or the church sought to master the state. In some cases the church was looked upon as a co-equal to the state, having its own separate domain of influence and power. In the East the church accepted the supremacy of the state. In the West the state became a servant of the church. In the midst of all of this high degree of acceptance of the world on the part of the church it never gave up the idea that the state was of this world and therefore evil. Even in the Middle Ages these two ideas persisted. Concerning this dualistic attitude Troeltsch says, "This dualistic attitude toward the world was

Troeltsch, "The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches", p. 145.
Ibid, p. 146.

always the same and was held by the same people; it is not divided up among different teachers, but it is peculiar to them all, only the emphasis varies in its component parts. Nothing will be rightly understood if that fact is overlooked, and if shades of opinion are taken to imply differences in theory; this applies with peculiar force to the great theologians of the Christian empire, and to their attemps to formulate fresh theories. Indeed this statement also applies to the fundamental statements of Paul, who urged the believer to walk through this world as a stranger and a pilgrim and yet teaches that the powers that be are ordained by God for a good purpose."

The synthesis of the Middle Ages was based upon this dualistic principle. Although Thomas Aquinas sought to unify civilization under the control and direction of the church he was never able to solve this dualistic problem. Even within the Medieval church this dual tendency was always present.

During the Protestant Reformation Western civilization experienced a break-down of its unity. With this break-down came a new attitude toward the state. We find, during this period, varying degrees of separation between church and state. This separation gave rise to the theory of mutual co-existence. Most of the reformers looked upon the church and the state as two independent entities, each with its own sphere of influence.

The Protestant attitude toward the state was expressed most clearly by Luther, Calvin and Beza. Troeltsch describe's Luther's conception of the state as follows:

"The state is a product of reason and is therefore, by its nature, restricted to the aims of mere reason, the preservation of external discipline and order, and the securing of human well being. It is the same 'police' and utilitarian idea of the state as in Catholicism, only now, in accordance with the circumstances, there is a greater emphasis upon unity of authority . . . According to Luther's own logical doctrine, however, the only resistance to these 'tyrants' which he will countenance is that of passive resistance, or endurance, or in a case of religious persecution he would recommend those who are opposed to go into exile. In this sense the state is always justified both by nature and by divine law, even among Turks and pagans; indeed, in its natural sense, it is even particularly excellent among pagans and the ancient doctrine of the state and examples drawn from it can still be used to

Troeltsch, "The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches", Ibid, p. 147-8.

the profit of the state at the present day. To this extent the state is something really divine."

According to Luther, the individual is to look upon the state as something both divine and supreme. Although the state is ordained of God for the well being of its subjects individuals do not have the right to use violence to resist authority even if authority is oppressive. In this sense the state is even superior to the church. While the state has the right to use force and violence to protect its interest the church has no such right. Violence is contrary to the Christian spirit of love. While the state may conquer its enemies with force the church can only conquer its enemies with love. For Luther this is the basic distinction between the church and state. For him both the church and state are divine. Although the state is divine it is non-Christian. Luther's view of the state, like most of his theology, is paradoxical and sometimes contradictory.

If Luther's conception of the state is Medieval Calvin's is even more Medieval. In his writings Calvin talks extensively about the Holy community. As one studies his relationship with the Geneva authorities he is impressed by his theocratic tendencies. To a much greater extent than Luther, Calvin sought to dominate the state. During his life time the Swiss Government almost became a theocracy. If Calvin believed in co-existence it was one of which the church was supreme. It has been said that both Calvin and Luther believed in the co-existence of church and state; each having its own separate function. Only Luther leaned toward state supremacy while Calvin favored church supremacy.

It was not Calvin, but his faithful disciple, Beza who gave to us an entirely new philosophy of the state. This philosophy grew out of his unfavorable experience with secular authority. Troeltsch says:

"It is, therefore, not at all strange that Calvin's most loyal disciple and follower, Beza, in face of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the irremediable godlessness of the French government, finally altogether discarded the theory of the duty of subjects to be obedient, and that for such cases of need he frankly proclaimed the sovereignty of the people as the ultimate court of appear."

Thus we see that the church has included within its thinking three major philosophies of the state. It is also interesting to note that modern Christianity has not contributed anything new in the field.

Troeltsch, "The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches", p. 548.
Troeltsch, "The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches", p. 629.

The Function of the State in Human Society

In the discussion of this topic there are two approaches that one can take: 1—The historical approach. He may review the functions of the state as it has existed down through the ages, and by comparing these functions arrive at a certain philosophy. 2—The philosophical approach; he may bring to such a discussion a certain point of view and seek to prove its practicality and validity. In this discussion we shall use the latter.

The state is primarily a conserving and protective agency. It is the duty of the state to conserve and protect the various institutions of human society. Human culture is made possible by human association. It is the duty of the state to see to it that in the process of human association both the rights of the individual and welfare of the group are protected.

There are four basic groups of association in our civilization. They are as follows: 1—The instrumental group, such as a man's association with the Philadelphia Electric Company. This association is for the most part economic. Men associate with each other in order to earn a better living for himself and his family. 2—The congenial groups of association, such as bridge clubs, and golfing associations. 3—The idealistic groups of association, such as the Masonic Order and the American Legion. These groups are composed of persons who have banded themselves together for the purpose of sharing and promulgating certain ideals. 4—The nurturing group. The family is the primary nurturing association. It is not difficult to see that these associations overlap. Although there is overlapping the fact remains that there is a distinctive quality about each that gives validity to its classification.

It is not necessary here to enter into a lengthy discussion of the relationship between these various forms of association. The question at hand is, what should be the proper relationship of the state to these various forms of associations?

In the previous chapter we pointed out that there were three basis philosophies of the state: 1—That it was ordained of God. 2—That it was an end in itself, and therefore supreme. 3—That it was created and exists for the people. We believe that the state is ordained of God and created as a means of protecting the welfare of the people. It is not an end in itself, but derives its value from the will of God and the needs of men. Whenever the state fails to obey the will of God and

protect the welfare of the people it has no reason to exist. It then becomes the people's God-given privilege and responsibility to change its structure and destroy its authority. The administration of the affairs of any state should be subject to the will of the people of that state. The government, whether it be an individual or parliament, is a servant of the people under God. In the event of a conflict of interest between institutions or individuals the state should act as the impartial judge. This judgment should be based upon the will of God and the welfare of the people. In case of a conflict of interest between states the state should seek to do the will of God. If the government feels that it is prohibited from doing the will of God because of the objection of the people it should endeavor to change the attitude of the people by Christian means. Failing in this the government should resign. Never should the state force its will upon the people. The state can only serve God by serving the people.

While the state does not have the right to force its will upon the people it does have the right to enforce its laws which themselves are expressions of the will of the people. The police power of the state should only be used to bring individuals and groups of individuals in line with the public interest. No minority should be allowed to profit at the expense of the majority and no majority should be permitted to oppress a minority. The rights of each individual should be equally protected and the laws of the state should be equally and universally applied.

The form of government employed to manage the affairs of the state is incidental. The most important thing about any government is how it receives its authority. A government should receive and maintain control over the people only so long as the people consent. The government should be by the consent of the governed. When this is true it matters little whether that government is parliamentary, monarchy, bureacratic, or democratic.

The best way to protect the rights of the people is through a democratic form of government. The greatest ideal of the Western world is the ideal of democracy. There are many who like to trace the modern democratic ideal back to the Greeks. When we consider the great contribution made by the Greeks to Western culture we are not surprised by this inclination. However, to say that the modern democratic ideal is a Greek contribution to Western culture is without foundation. Democracy, as we know it today, is primarily a Latin

and Anglo-Saxon concept. It has it roots in the Magna Charta of England and the French idea of social contract.

The modern democratic state has two facets: It is a way of life and a technique of government. The first is the end or goal. The latter is the political means of achieving that end. It is a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The great problem of our era is in the definition of the phrase, "the people." To some "the people" are the industrial magnets, the captains of big business. To others "the people" are the great American middle class. To still others "the people" are only the members of the large labor unions who have the right to press their demands at the expense of the rest of society.

Democracy as a technique of government is based upon liberty, equality, and fraternity, but again each of these words must be carefully analyzed as to its meaning. What do we mean by "liberty", "equality", "fraternity"? Certainly the liberty of the individual does not mean that he has absolute freedom to do anything he wishes. Nor by equality do we mean that all men are born equal. In Western democracy the degree of equality is determined empirically, and not by birth. Perhaps, we mean by equality, the ideal of justice and fair play—equality of opportunity. And likewise it is with fraternity. Does not fraternity need reciprocity and inter-communication? Fraternity is a two-way traffic road. It cannot be a one way street. Fraternity is based upon the free and unfettered communication of all men. Segregation, discrimination and all forms of bigotry have no place in a democratic society and are contrary to the democratic ideal.

The democratic ideal puts first the belief in the essential dignity of man. There is a fundamental respect for human personalities. It is imbued with a faith in the development and possibilities of persons. It seeks the widest fellowship possible for all men. Personal freedom is wedded to personal responsibility. A democracy believes that a nation grows by the process of sharing the experiences of its diverse elements; that such sharing requires that all of the people should have a chance to express themselves, and that each man much be treated with respect because of the unique contribution which he alone can make to human society.

The Church—Its Nature and Function

Before we can state the function of the church and its relationship to the state we need to clarify what we mean by "the church". It is

necessary that we define the church theologically, philosophically and historically.

Historically speaking, the church is an organized expression of that prophetic religion which we call Christianity. With this definition in mind let us consider the difference between Christianity and the Ethnic religions in their relationships to a culture or civilization. One of the fundamental characteristics of any Ethnic religion is its nativity to its culture. We are familiar with the identification of primitive Ethnic religions with their cultures. Both the good and the evil are so intermingled in the structure of the Ethnic religion that it makes it impossible for the religion to purify the culture. An Ethnic religion cherishes the ideas, hopes, aspirations, and values of its culture. It seeks to maintain its traditions, conserve its achievements, perpetuate its institutions, and realize its ideals. By so doing it also perpetuates its evils. It advocates stability, resists change and looks with suspicion upon new ideas. It becomes a supporter of the status-quo. It becomes a champion of the old and a destroyer of the new.

In contrast, a prophetic religion rises out of crucial periods in the history of mankind. It comes to flower when the acids of change and of conflict have eaten away all but the vital essentials of an Ethnic faith. This vital remainder inter-reacts with the forces of change. For a long period of conflict and inter-reaction with alien cultures it finally wins for itself a place in society. It is as a result of conflict, cross-fertilization, critical examination, and revelation that this Ethnic faith becomes a prophetic religion. An outstanding example of the working is seen in the evolution of the primitive Hebrew faith into the religion of the Eighth Century Prophets and the Judaism that is found in the Roman Empire. The primitive tribal Ethnic religion of the ancient Hebrew passed through several crises until it finally blossomed forth into the monotheism of Second Isaiah. It was this prophetic religion that paved the way for world Christianity.

As one reads the Book of Jeremiah he becomes aware of the tremendous struggle between the Ethnic and prophetic element in the Hebrew faith. It was because the prophetic element became dominant that the Hebrew religion survived. It was the prophetic insight that made its deepest imprint upon the Christian religion. The genius of the Christian religion rests in the fact that it is independent from the bonds of any culture. Because of this unique position it is free to critically examine any culture, to indict it if necessary and to trans-

form it if possible. Christianity is a culture–transcending religion.

The great fallacy of such outstanding historians like Troeltsch is that they fail to appreciate this point. They commit the sin of describing Christianity as a cultural phenomenon. The fact that Christianity is a culture–transcending religion must be understood if we are to understand the real nature of the church.

A brief glance at the history of the Christian religion will suffice to prove our contention. Historically, Christianity early became an orphan. It could find no home in its native land of Palestine amid the Jewish culture. At the same time it could find no real home with the Greeks and Romans. The greatest contribution made by Christianity was during the time it was an orphan religion in an alien culture. After a long process of conflict and persecution Constantine gave the orphan a home in a palace. As a result Christianity almost died. This Imperial marriage between Christianity and Roman culture served to weaken the Christian faith. Fortunately for the church Roman culture became sick and died leaving Christianity a widow.

During the Middle Ages Christianity again married a culture with Thomas Aquinas performing the ceremony. Again the church became polluted and its spiritual vitality waned. Fortunately for Christianity this culture also died but not before it had taken its toll upon the Christian faith and the widow this time was left very weak.

Yet another marriage has taken place this time between Western industrial technological culture. Today this culture appears to be dying of the hardening of the arteries. It seems that our generation is doomed to behold its disintegration. The great question is, Can Christianity survive Western civilization?

Our survey of the history of the Christian church reveals two major tendencies: 1—That Christianity is always striving to maintain its culture-transcending element. 2—That Christianity is continually faced with a temptation to sink back into the culture and become an Ethnic religion.

Theologically speaking, the church is more than a prophetic religion. A prophetic religion is one that does not grow out of culture alone. It is a product of divine revelation, conflict, cross-fertilization and human insight. It receives its impetus from the religious sensitivity of great souls like Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah and Isaiah. The Christian church, however, is more than the sum total of human sensitivities. It receives its dynamics, not from the man's insight into the nature of God, but from God's disclosure of Himself to man. Because Christ

is more than a priest, Christianity is more than an Ethnic faith. Because Christ is more than a prophet, Christianity is more than a prophetic religion. Christ is prophet, priest and king. He is more. Christ is God. He is God reconciling the world unto Himself. He is God disclosing Himself. Christ is God reaching out for man. Christianity rests upon the bed-rock of the Divine Act. Therefore, Christianity is basically other-worldly. It is something from above, unique and eternal.

The church is that community of believers whose primary commitment is given to God as revealed in Christ. It is that Christian fellowship of those whose supreme loyalty is to Christ. According to this definition we can see that the church does not consist primarily of all the members of the visible congregation. There are many who call themselves Christians but who do not share the fellowship with Christ.

It is well that we define a bit closely what we mean by commitment to Christ. It means to accept Him as the Lord of one's life and the Saviour of one's soul. This commitment is always the result of faith. It is impossible to enter the fellowship of believers without first receiving the faith that makes possible one's acceptance of the grace of God. The center of the church is Christ. The supreme revelation of Christ is found in the Scripture. The head of the church is Christ. The hope of the church is eternity. The purpose of the church is to bring redemption to man. Although the church is of another world it must perform its task in this world. The relationship of the church and the world is the enduring problem of the Christian faith. According to Troeltsch the church has expressed three basic attitudes toward the world. They are as follows: 1—Withdraw (the sect type). 2—The control of this world (church type). 3—Co-existence with the world (Lutheran-Protestantism).

It is the duty of the church to glorify God and bring salvation to men. It is to redeem man from a life of sin to a life in Christ. This is what the Fourth Gospel means by eternal life. Eternal life is more than perpetual existence. It is more than a continuation of life after death. Eternal life is a new quality of existence. It is being born from above. It is receiving the grace of God. It is the church that possesses this grace. For the Roman Catholic the means of grace are to be found in the Sacraments. For the Protestant, the means of grace are made possible by the individual's faith in Christ. This faith is

made possible by the Christian testimony which is the preaching of the Word. It is this Christian testimony that makes possible the Christian fellowship. It is the Christian fellowship that demands the Christian Sacraments. The Sacraments are only a means of grace in so far as it is an act of obedience to the command of Christ.

Philosophically speaking, the church is that institution in society which provides for its culture a theology, a philosophy, and a morality. It is the duty of the church to provide a spiritual basis for human existence. It is also the duty of the church to provide the means by which the spiritual goals of life can be attained and the dynamics by which a lost world can be redeemed.

The Relationship of Church and State

Having examined the nature and function of both church and state let us proceed to answer the question, What constitutes an ideal relationship between these two great institutions?

In the previous chapter we described the four basic groups of human association. They are as follows: 1—The instrumental group, 2—The congenial group, 3—The idealistic group, 4—The nurturing group. It is with these four groups that both the church and state must deal. It is to these groups that the church and state owe its allegiance. We have also emphasized that the state is primarily an agent created to protect these associations. It is the duty of the church to provide each individual who constitutes these groups a philosophy, a theology and a morality. It is the duty of the church to give to the people a Christian world view. It is also the duty of the church to inspire individuals to conduct themselves in a way that is befitting a Christian.

The church should not in its highest sense seek to perform the function of any of these groups. Nor should it be a mere combination of these. It is the duty of the church to so transcend these groups that it will be able to criticize, purify and condemn whenever the occasion demands. The distinctive unique function of the church is to foster sensitivity and commitment to that which is noble and good in every area of life. Also it should provide a culture-transcending reference. To use the language of the preacher it is the duty of the church to glorify God, to bring salvation, to convict sinners, and to promote the kingdom. It must seek to point men to that supreme good which is outside of themselves and their culture.

If the church is to perform its duty it must not be handicapped

by submission to the state. History has proven that whenever the the church becomes a tool of the state its sacred mission is prostituted by political interest. Neither should the church seek to take unto its self the functions of the state. Whenever the church swallows the state it will find that its functions are too much to digest. The great weaknesses of any theocracy is that it soon becomes void of spiritual vitality. Church and state should exist side by side each having its own separate spheres of authority. Whenever these spheres of authority overlap the church should have the final authority. The church must not limit its influence to its sphere of authority. It must seek to make the gospel of Christ permeate all of life. The church should have authority over the state. This authority should not be ecclesiastical. It should be a moral authority resting upon the Christian philosophy of life. As a church it has no right to overthrow the civil authority by the use of violence.

If the action of the state runs counter to the principles of Christianity the church has the right and the moral duty to use moral duty to use moral persuasion in order to bring about the desired change. If the state is not serving the interests of the people individual Christians may revolt. This revolution should be by a ballot if possible. If this is not possible violence may be used. The state has no right to oppose Christian principles or run counter to the will of the people. If the will of the people runs counter to Christian principles the church must insist upon the preservation, propagation and demonstration of Christian ideals and principles.

Conclusion

Any study of the Relationship of Church and State is wilfully incomplete unless it dares to answer the question, What does this mean to life in the latter half of the twentieth century?

The greatest need of our modern era is a world church and a world state. Western civilization needs a unifying power. We need a new synthesis of civilization. This synthesis must be brought about by the church and state working together to achieve a common goal, or by the church or state taking matters in its own hand and working independently of, and even hostile to the other. The communistic state and the Roman Catholic church are examples of the church and state working separately and hostile to each other. Whatever the relationship the time is right for a universal state and an ecumenical church.

Whatever the criticism, (and there is much to criticize) the Ecu-

menical Council meeting in Evanston, Illinois, and the United Nations in New York are not accidents. They express the two basic needs of Western culture: a universal state and an ecumenical church. The destiny of modern man depends upon a united world.

We are living in a time when people throughout the world are victims of a bitter disenchantment. They seek peace and find war. They strive for abundance and suffer want. They attempt to recapture vanished landmarks and the half-forgotten hopes of a lost faith only to find frustration. Modern man needs a church that will restore his faith and a state that will guide him into new adventures of human achievements—achievements of peace, prosperity and human fellowship.

In his blind and brutish struggle for survival, mankind is rapidly losing his sense of values. McCarthyism in the U. S. A. and the Mau Mau uprising in Africa are both dramatic expressions of the distorted sense of values. They are distorted and unrealistic solutions to the present crisis.

There are three attitudes that one may take as he faces the world situation. They are as follows: 1—Like the holy men of old he may renounce the world and retire from its disappointments to commune with God. 2—He might content himself with merely cursing the world and damning its tragedies. In the words of Homar, he may cry, "the time is out of joint; O cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right!" 3—He may accept the responsibility of setting right his disjointed age. To him it may become a challenge to fashion a better civilization than the world has ever known.

The writer of this paper believes that the third attitude is the only position that a Christian should take.

The only philosophy that can set right our disjointed world is the belief in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. We must believe that all men are brothers and that God is the father of us all. The fatherhood of God rests upon both a natural and a religious foundation. Of one blood God made all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth. Therefore by the act of creation all men are the sons of God. In Adam all men sinned and fell short of the grace of God. Therefore in their sins they remain brothers. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Therefore in their redemptive state this brotherhood is not destroyed but purified, sanctified and glorified.

The only other philosophy upon which the world can be united is a belief in man as nothing more than a "thinking brute" governed by the law of the survival of the fittest. It does not take much imagination to see that if this law prevails the Western world will soon become an hydrogen inferno.

We are living in an age when the philosophy of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man must prevail. It is the only basis upon which both church and state can pursue the course of human advancements while striving to form a new cultural synthesis.

In the words of Schuman, "Modern mankind must unite or die, The disciples of 'democracy' and 'capitalism' refused to face the issue or to redefine their beliefs and habits in the light of it. But men cling to life and usually do, in one fashion if not in another, what must be done in order to live. The task of unifying the world perforce been assumed by the sworn enemies of capitalism and democracy. What the Pen and the Word failed to do, the Sword is in process of doing. What men of good will and men of tolerance and reason would not do, men of barbaric vigor and ruthlessness are accomplishing. The new Caesars, like those of ancient days, may conquer the earth and bring peace to humanity. They may plunge the planet into a dark and unending night of blood and chaos. They may reawaken the surviving capitalist democracies into resuming the role they have abdicated. Which of these possibilities is most likely to be realized cannot yet be said. Yet in any event, in the very midst of ruin and death, the necessities of the twentieth century are somehow being met."

We believe that the Christian religion is the best basis for a unified civilization. Only as Christianity becomes broad enough to include the whole of life can it hope to serve as a bridge spanning the chasms of nationalism, of color, and culture. It is the only thing that can bring all men together as brothers under the reign of God.

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Where are the Ministers stationed? Reverend Collins Lee from Martin Temple, Chicago, to Wesley Metropolitan, Washington. Reverend L. R. Bennett from Mt. Zion, Montgomery, Ala., to San Francisco. Reverend H. A. L. Clement comes in from the Coast and is stationed at Mt. Zion. Reverend W. E. Carson, after a long pastorate at Butler Chapel, Tuskegee, moves on to State Street Church, Mobile. The Reverend R. S. Lomax leaves Carlisle, Penna., and is stationed at Poplar Street, Philadelphia. The Reverend C. W. Turns replaces the Reverend R. L. Speaks (who moves to St. Mark, Durham) at Varick in Philadelphia while the Reverend S. P. Perry goes to Hood Temple, Richmond. The Reverend Babington-Johnson replaces the Reverend R. A. Council (who is now at Metropolitan, Norfolk,) at Logan Temple, Knoxville, Tenn. Reverend J. F. Smith leaves South Side Church, Asheville, and is stationed at Williamston, N. C. Reverend R. E. Stephens goes to Mt. Lebanon Church, Elizabeth City, N. C. The Reverend W. T. Kennedy leaves Westfield, New Jersey, for responsibilities at Martin Temple Church, Chicago, Ill. There are many other changes which we have not received as yet.

The A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review regrets sincerely the passing of Mother Hattie Walls, mother of Bishop W. J. Walls, and Presiding Elder W. W. Long of the Central North Carolina Conference.

THE CHURCH

EPISCOPAL ADDRESS NEW JERSEY CONFERENCE

Delivered by Bishop H. B. Shaw, April 1956

TO THE PRESIDING ELDERS, PASTORS, DISTRICT OFFICERS, DELEGATES AND FRIENDS—GREETINGS:

We are thankful to God our Father that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we have the blessed privilege of meeting with you in this the Eighty-Second Session of the New Jersey Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

Full eighty-seven years ago our forefathers launched out in the great state of New Jersey under the competent leadership of that brilliant pioneer and organizer, the late Bishop Joseph Jackson Clinton. I now quote from the History of the A. M. E. Zion Church, by Bishop John J. Moore.

"There are few really great men in this world, when we consider what properly constitutes a great man. It is not simply genius, or a high development of some one or two superior talents, or intellectual powers, or a vast fund of accumulated knowledge, that makes a great man; many men have these, yet they are far from being truly great men. A great man is one in whom concentrates an unusual number of those native qualities and attainments that are most elevating and ennobling to mankind—church native qualities as a love of divine things, a deep veneration of God; a love of humanity of mankind; a deep sense of human justice. Men who have been benefactors of mankind while they lived, and after death—by the devotion of their native talents, their attainments, and time, and the sacrifice of life; men seeking the happiness of others at the sacrifice of their own—such illustrious specimen of humanity as the great Charles Sumner, William Lloyd Garrison, Garret Smith, Wilbeforce, and Howard—such men, who lived only to glorify God and bless mankind, may be reckoned among great men.

May we not say of our lamented Bishop Clinton that he was a true representative of those human excellences: (1). In his noble nature was a profound love of divine things; this was developed in his early espousal of religion (at the age of fifteen years), and this ennobling nature, prompted by the tuition of a Christian mother, found a strong development at that early period of his life.

(2). His heart, in its natural prompting, went out after the com-

mon and special well-being of his fellow men; this was evidenced in his early engagement in the work of the Christian ministry. The further attestation of the strength of his philanthropic nature, was his connection with the underground railroad (in the palmy days of slavery), in which he was frequently exposed to great personal dangers.

(3. He had a high and holy ambition to make himself qualified to do good among his fellow men; hence when he was but a youth, he would sacrifice comforts and pleasures to pursue his studies successfully, even in his early school going; this is the testimony of his faithful matron.

(4). His sympathetic nature was strongly developed; sanctified as it was by the spirit of Christianity, he was always willing to share the sufferings of others.

(5). He was naturally faithfully devoted to the cause he espoused, and with Christian principles, no service was too hard, no sacrifice too great to serve his cause. I have been side by side with him in ministerial hardships, when he seemed to take pleasure in enduring them.

(6). His attainments were of no ordinary character: 1. His knowledge of human nature. 2. The importance of his holy calling. 3. His social relations—filial, conjugal, parental—these had their true development in his whole life's deportment; in his common social relations he rendered to all classes.

(4). All good institutions had his favor and co-operation –to many of which he was a contributing member and official representative.

Surely, then, we may rank him among the truly great men of our day; "There is a prince and a great man fallen." May we not justly designate him a prince? Speaking of his death, may we not say, as as said the royal singer, a "prince has fallen?" As a prince, he stood at the head of his rank of distinguished men. 1. The work of his ministerial labors during life was princely; through his instrumentality, during his ministerial efforts, 100,000 Sunday School scholars were brought into our connection; during his episcopal office he organized ten annual conferences in the Zion connection; he also took into the connection 700 itinerant preachers.

2. He was a princely executive officer. In this high function he had no superior; for twenty-five years he filled the office with complete success and satisfaction to his church.

He was a prince in the pulpit, in power, dignity, and effectiveness. There was in his oratory the happiest result of nature and art combined; his eliquence would sometimes seem to be charged with divine elec-

tricity, thus wrapping in heavenly rapture his whole audience, while his heart would seem to be charged with the fire of pathos, stirring the most stoical. The topical was generally his method of homiletical arrangement; in his discourses he was concise, perspicuous, forcible and masterly; in their rendition, his language was never wanting in in chasteness—therefore efficiency never failed to yield his efforts success. But this "prince and great man has fallen,"—with us he is no more.

We humbly bow to the divine mandate that bereaves us of this bright star that scintillated in the horizon of Zion's spreading hopes. In his last converse with his kindred ones, as they stood by to watch his departing spirit as it took leave of time and mortal sense—with ministers and other friends that gathered around his last pillow of life—he said to them, just as he sunk into the shades of death, "All is well; I am ready for the glorious change,"—then fell asleep, and bade us all on earth adieu.

I have taken this time to give you this pen picture of the organizer of this great conference so that we might have the opportunity to be reinspired and to rededicate ourselves to the emulation of virtues and recommit ourselves to his ideals. From the time of the rise and demise of Joseph Jackson Clinton to the advent and departure of Cameron Chesterfield Alleyne, the New Jersey Conference has been on the march.

I have solemnly come today to thank you one and all for the fine cooperation you have given my episcopal leadership since I have been in your midst. As you look back over the past four years I am sure that you are fully able to appraise the progress made. No doubt had your episcopal leadership not been interrupted by death's invasion, more would have been accomplished. I am sure that this unexpected intervention brought to an abrupt end many of the unrealized and other unrevealed dreams of my noble and illustrious predecessor. Upon coming on the scene it was incumbent upon us to take up the well begun work and attempt to carry on with God's help and your cooperation. How well we have done will be for our successors to determine.

Our Missionary Work

I think that we have performed a real service in the total area of our missionary work. The District Officers of the W. H. & F. M. Society have certainly given excellent account of their unparalleled leadership

on both districts. Mrs. Emma B. Sargent, District President of the Jersey City District, and Mrs. Mahalia Atchison, of the Camden District both supported by their loyal co-district officers and the local presidents, secretaries, superintendents, chairmen, and captains have done a magnificent job during this quadrennium. We now express our heartfelt thanks to them. All assessments and requirements have been met in full and the spiritual impace of these noble women is yet in full bloom.

In the area of Home Missions, or as I sometimes like to call it, interchurch assistance, we have wrought a good work. All the churches have responded with their full quotas and we have endeavored to give good account of our stewardship in the distribution of these sacred funds. At this point, I regret to report that we were not able to save our houses in Orange. They have been demolished. We still have the land where I hope we will soon build a parsonage and parish house to meet the needs of the people in this community. The treasurer of our Home Missions Board will give us a full report on receipts and disbursements of all money raised for interchurch assistance or Home Missions.

African Girls School Legion

The work of raising funds for the Annie Lucille Alleyene Girls School was near and dear to the heart of our late Colleague, Bishop Alleyne. This New Jersey Conference under the leadership of Mrs. Symera Hoggard of the Jersey City District, and Mrs. Mollie Lankford of the Camden District, together with the loyal support and active cooperation of pastors and laymen, has raised thousands of dollars for this worthy project. I am pleased to report to you that we have already sent to our Foreign Missions Secretary, The Reverend J. C. Hoggard, $1,340.00 received in our last Annual Conference. All funds received for this purpose in this conference will be remitted forthwith to our Foreign Missions Secretary.

Conference Workers

I am especially grateful to our Conference Workers for the financial support they have given to the Annual Conference. We are thus able to make many contributions to needy persons and causes to which we would have to turn a deaf ear were it not for the excellent support of these fine workers. It is our sincere hope that in the future we shall be able to do at least a few of the things we have in mind through the utilization of this fund.

Christian Education Department

This phase of our work not only envisions the needs of our youth but also includes the spiritual and social needs of all members of our church regardless of age. I truly hope that our General Church will give closer attention and support to the work of Christian Education. To me this work challenges us with perhaps our most sacred duty and responsibility. We are charged by Jesus Christ himself to, "Go Teach." He knew that we would have to know how to live in order that we might enjoy the abundant life. He said, "I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly," therefore he admonished, "Learn of me."

Now if we are to learn of Him we certainly must be exposed to Christian Education. When we are born into the world we are void of everything. We enter the gate of human existence without a consciousness of creed, race or color. We have no idea of what is right or wrong. We do not know whether we will speak a Chinese, French, Italian, German, or English language. We do not know whether we live in Turkey, Japan, Spain or Mexico. We do not know or care whether we will worship Allah, Buddha, Brahma, or the true and living God. All these things we must be taught. People don't just naturally love and hate. They are taught to bring these emotions into action and to direct them against certain persons and things. Thus it is that as a Christian church we are even more seriously challenged to perform this our prime duty of teaching the Christian way of life to every creature. If we have juvenile delinquency, I think that we will find that the amount existing is in almost equal ratio to our teaching and training delinquency. The cure for juvenile delinquency is juvenile development. Train the child in the way he should go and then go with him in that way. I am sometimes afraid that we give one kind of training and another kind of example. Our youth is depending upon us. Let us not let them down in their expectation. Our adolescents, teenagers, young adults, and adults are all looking to us for answers to many of their acute life problems.

We know that there are problems which must be met and solved by the adolescent. There are certain new facts of life that must be explained. There are certain complexes that must be dealt with and dissipated through proper instruction. There are certain instructional and explanatory movies which should be shown to our adolescents.

Now for our teen agers, those who have passed twelve years of

age and crossed the threshold of the teen age, we must most certainly seek to understand them and their problems and have them understand us and our approach to the solution of those problems. The church must not side step its responsibility to this very important group in our midst. We should set up a teen ager's clinic in which we would ana lyze or diagnose each problem presented and seek to give the formula for the solution for the same. I use the word formula here for when we reach a certain age we must be taught that we must solve certain problems for ourselves. We must be made to understand that these problems cannot be solved by others, but will remain with us until we ourselves solve them. I believe that this is the reason that some older people act as children for they have not yet learned to solves these elementary problems.

The teen ager has to meet a new world, new people and new things. He must now learn that the quiet trusting confidence of childhood must be exchanged for a guarding vigilance that will protect him from the viles of the world. They must be taught the realities of sex along with the virtue of proper sex behavior. They must be taught concerning the evils of liquor, dope and excessive use of tobacco. They must be taught what they are to expect from society and what society expects of them.

I will not go further into this detail but I hope that I have said enough for you to understand my suggested approach. We should set up clinics, study and instructional classes to deal with the following:

1. Premarital preparation.
2. How to deal with problems after marriage.
3. How to accept sickness.
4. How to accept old age gracefully.
5. How to accept being alone, after children are grownup and gone from home.
6. How to deal with disappointments and discouragements.
7. How to keep the family together.
8. How to keep marriage off the rocks on the sea of matrimony.
9. How to deal with a flirting wife or husband.
10. The value of the family altar in the home.

To do the kind of work here suggested will cost money and time. We should set up an adequate budget for both. Your Bishop is ready to meet this challenge and invites you to join with him in a honest to goodness crusade against both juvenile and adult delinquency and

also the wrongs and evils that have broken so many hearts and homes.

The Laymen

I would like here to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the faithful and loyal laymen of the New Jersey Conference for the wholehearted support they have given to their local leadership, the General Church, and to the Annual Conference. Your ministers are your spiritual leaders who are engaged in the all important work of leading you into the abundant life through Christ Jesus our Lord. I congratulate you upon the spiritual progress you have made and the devotion you have shown to the work of advancing the Kingdom of God through the instrumentality of the A. M. E. Zion Church.

I hope you will pardon the personal reference to Dr. Earnest A. Robinson, but because of his great love and devotion to his local church, the general church and the conference and his fine leadership in the Layman's Organization of this Conference, I think that he is now due this citation. We are proud of him and his contribution to the work of the church. Certainly there are others whose names I could now call, but time will not permit. To all our faithful laymen I say, "Orchids to you."

There are many things I have in mind as projects for our laymen to do. There are many areas of service within the church where they could utilize their talents for real leadership. I insist that our laymen must be permitted to assume their rightful place of leadership. There are certain areas in the church where our ministry must assume the leadership, and there are other places where the laymen must do the same. This is not a preachers church or a laymen's church, it is both and each must assume the responsibility of leadership in due season. We need more men in the church. I feel if we will give them positions of responsibility after having trained them, they will have an increased sense of belonging and necessity and will assume their rightful places in the church.

Revivals—Evangelistic Crusade

No one can successfully argue against the point that our church is in dire need of real red hot religious revivals. We who are in the church need more of that unction that only can come from God on high. The fires on the altar are burning low. The Scripture tells us that the fires on the altar shall be kept burning, they should never be permitted to go out.

Revive us again
Fill each heart with thy love
May each soul be rekindled
With fire from above.
Hallelujah, thine the glory
Hallelujah, Amen.
Hallelujah, thine the glory
Revive us again.

Not only do we need to revive the church, but we should launch a gigantic evangelistic crusade that will bring at least ten thousand new members into our churches. With good planning, good publicity, good contacts, good lay workers, good praying, good preaching, and good living, we can win the world to Christ. Let us go forward.

Fellowship of the Ministry

With a brief discussion of this all important topic, I close.

My fellow ministers, we are brothers in the Lord. God is our Father, Jesus Christ is our elder Brother, and the Holy Spirit is our Comforter and family keeper.

Again, I say to you, that we must love one another even as Christ has loved us. We must be interested in the total success and progress of each other. We must be kind, considerate, patient, tolerant, understanding, faithful and true. Again, I say that there are no big preachers, no little preachers, all of us are ministers in Christ Jesus, brothers beloved. Christ himself hath called us and elevated us to this high and exalted place. As the great apostle has said, "in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned. By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true; as unknown and yet well known, as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

My faithful and loyal co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord, I hail you and salute you.

SERMONIC LITERATURE

MOTHER WALLS

By Bishop Stephen Hill Spottswood

Ezekiel 19:10—"Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters; she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters." (KJV)

"Your mother was like a vine in a vineyard, planted by waters. She was fruitful, and full of branches because of waters many." (AAT)

"She is wise, our ancient Mother,
Her ways are not our ways;
We cannot circumscribe her
Though we watch her all our days.

"On each her questioning children
She presses a different will;
To one she says 'Keep busy',
To one she says, 'Keep still.'

"She said to me, 'Wait and listen,'
I have plenty to draive and do;
Then once in a while when you are sure
Speak out a word or two."

Karle Wilson Baker

Here is a text taken from a lamentation of Ezekiel—a lamentation for Jerusalem but nevertheless, mighty in prospect. Altho Jerusalem has fallen in his prophecy, she is not dead in Ezekiel's perspective. We note the use of the present tense altho it was at least the fifth year of the exile of Jehoiachin (BC 592).

Jerusalem, mother city of the Jews, center of the greatest theocracy in history, he said "is like a vine in thy blood." Between 400 BC and the destruction under Titus in 70 AD, Jerusalem was besieged seventeen times, twice razed. Two other times her walls were breached, yet, she returned to her original splendor and restoration in happy symbolism of the regeneration of the human soul under God.

Mother Walls, mother of a great family and mother of the greatest living incarnation of Zion Methodism, is like a vine in the blood of her family, the blood of the Connection, the blood of the Christian Church. Here was an ongoing life that reached from her early maturity in youth to past four score years and ten, reaching the compliment of a great

son's personality and over-reaching countless preachers, friends and kinsmen who rise up on both sides of eternity to call her "blessed."

Mother—A Vine in Thy Blood

Of all the characteristics of the ultimate development of humanity, none is nearer the goal than the full-fledged unfoldment of motherhood. Hattie Walls was a woman of many parts. She played the roles that each script in the drama of her life called for with dexterity and beauty. But she played the role of motherhood with the finesse of perfection, literally the embodiment of the greatest spiritual experience, creativity hard by the creative spirit of the Creating-God.

Her personality grew like a vine in the bloodstream of her children, her friends, her community. She gave strength, nourishment and growth to all those who availed themselves of the gifts of her strong mind, keen insight and rich spirit.

Bereft of huband while yet a very young woman, she never faltered in the arduous task of rearing and educating her family. She did not hesitate to farm, to operate a laundry, to assume a hard day's work—to keep the physical bloodstream of her family strong and well. But at the same time she enthused her children with visions of training and the assumption of the larger responsibilities of life.

Endowed with the philosophy and personality of Mother Walls, her children sensed the strength of her character growing within them *like a vine in their blood.* All her kinsmen caught this endowment and the church of her choice, our Zion, knew that indeed she was a-mother-in-Israel. There is no far-flung outpost of Zion Methodism in the father-land or remote circuit of in America that has not experienced the output of her mind or the fullness of her love. She was mother of her family; she was mother to all her friends; she was the outstanding mother of Zion Methodism. Here we are reminded of lines from an OLD PLAY:

> "The mother in her office holds the key of the soul;
> And she it is who stamps the coin of character
> And makes the being who would be a savage,
> But for her gentle cares,
> 'A Christian Man.'
> Then crown her the queen of the world."

The many branches of this vine entwined the lives of countless men and women with strength and purpose and help and culminated in the friendship she always exhibited for the preachers. Always "in

their corner", she took the floor in the churches where she worshipped to urge the full support of the minister and the freedom of his leadership.

Mother and Son—

Washington Irving in one of his great essays wrote, "There is an enduring tenderness in the love of mother to a son that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience; she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory in his fame and exult in his prosperity; and if adversity overtakes him, he will be dearer to her in misfortune; if disgrace settles upon his name, she will still love and cherish him; and if all the world beside cast him off, she will be all the world to him."

When Mary knew that she had conceived a son who would be the long-promised Messiah, she sang a song of joy and thanksgiving:

"My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Saviour—
For He that is mighty hath done to me great things:
And Holy is His Name,..... ....."

Mother Walls must have had the kind of experience that prompted the MAGNIFICAT when her son, William Jacob Walls, was born. Her subsequent life—stalwart soul that she was—standing by her bishop son in every crisis of his career—giving encouragement and counsel, quickly discerning the spirits of friend, and foe alike, furnishing a background of domestic security and offering the careful assets of love, loyalty and labor—testify to the fact that she recognized him as a man of divine endowments and ecumenical destiny.

Stories from the life of St. Aurelius Augustine, renowned father of the Christian Church in the late fourth and early fifth centuries (354-Bishop 395-430 A. D.) haunt our minds today. Altho St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, claimed it credit for his conversion and it is certain that the reading of Paul's epistles, especially Romans, had a great influence on his religious experience, it is well-known that his mother Monica, (altho married to Patricius, a pagan) sat patiently thru her son's spiritual metamorphosis and kept him in the path of Christ, pointing to the perfection of the Son Of Man and urging her son to be God's son, too. His "Confessions" trace the path his mother led him as she became the door-mat upon which he wiped the feet of his

agnostic spirit before going-in to God" and his "City of God" shows us that Monica planted in his mind a vision of the day when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ and that he shall reign forever and ever—Hallelujah!"

When we have heard Bishop Walls preach with matchless eloquence for a life time; when we have seen him gravitate, by gifts of grace and mind, to the leadership of a great denomination of Christendom; when we have seen him stand on every continent in the world and represent the sons of Varick, Abraham Thompson and William Miller in the glory of one hundred and three score years of freedom, under God, despite slavery and discrimination; when we have read his forthright editorials in the STAR OF ZION and his delineation of Joseph Charles Price; when we have heard him talk of the character of John Jamison Moore, the skill of James Walker Hood, the patriotism and sacrifices of Bishop J. W. Loguen and Harriet Tubman; when we have witnessed his zeal for God and Zion—we are compelled to remember the words of the text: "Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters."

"The greatest battle that was ever fought—
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not:
It was fought by the Mothers of Men.

Not with cannon or battle shot,
With sword or nobler pen;
Not with eloquent word or thought
From the wonderful minds of men:

But deep in a walled up woman's heart:
A woman that would not yield;
But bravely and patiently bore her part;
Lo! there is that battlefield.

No marshalling troups, no bivouac song,
No banner to gleam and wave;
But Oh these battles they last so long—
From babyhood to the grave!

But faithful still as a bridge of stars
She fights in her walled up town;
Fights on and on in the endless wars:

Then silent, unseen goes down!

Ho! ye with banners and battle shot,
With soldiers to shout and praise,
I tell you the kingliest victories fought
Are fought in these silent ways."

Joaquin Miller

Mother and God

Our mothers are always near to God. Hattie Walls had an outstanding experience in God. She knew God as Saviour and Friend; she knew God as Guide and Help; she knew God in prayer and work; she knew God in the beauty of her handiwork and the service she rendered thru the church.

Henry Ward Beecher, greatest of 19th Century American preachers, compared our Lord to a mother when he said, "God pardons like a mother who kisses the offense into everlasting forgetfulness."

Surely Mother Walls took on many characteristics of the Eeternal God, who she found to be her "refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Possessed of an indominable will, she never gave up the pursuit of the various interests of her life. Always devout, but full of the verve of life, she learned of God from the early days in the hills of North Carolina, thru the metropolitan parishes of her pastor-son to the queenship of the Episcopal residence in Chicago. But these last few years—thru the ninth decade and a year of the long-life promised to those who "dwell in the secret place of the Most High," Sister Walls learned more of God than ever before. What secrets of the Kingdom He must have imparted to her in the final bed-fast years! When she could no longer behold the towering peaks of Chimney Rock or the surging waters of Lake Michigan, what visions of the land that is fairer than day must God have shown our beloved Sister Walls! When she could no longer go to church or attend our Conventions and General Conferences, think of the quiet consciousness of heaven and immortal glory that must have crept into her soul as Almighty God opened her eyes to behold a-city-called-heaven, "having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates and at the gates, twelve angels, and names written thereon which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three

gates; on the south three gates and on the west three gates—and the building of the wall was of Jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass—and I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.—And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations unto it."

So, like Enoch of old, the other morning she took her longest walk with God! Now she moves from earth to heaven; from this small sphere of a world to a universe of countless planets; now she walks, hand in hand with the Eternal outside time and beyond space, as

" . . . . if on joyful wing
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon and stars forget
Upward I fly,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer my God to thee,
Nearer to thee!

(Sarah F. Adams)

Dear family—dry your tears—we never lose those who have loved us—whom we love. They never, really, die. Mother Walls came up thru great tribulation—she washed her robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb! Now she has joined that immortal company that no man can number—but her spidit a-bides:

"Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters"
YEA—THE WATERS OF ETERNAL LIFE!
May 20, 1956.

Ministers of the Pittsburgh area would be interested in the Intercultural Camp being conducted at Camp Harmony, just out from Stoyestown. This venture in its third year is sponsored by the Church of the Brethren and has been participated in by many Zion people of the area. This year the Camp will be held Labor Day Weekend and can well serve as a family outing. There is no cost for sleeping arrangements but bring your own bed clothes. Meals run less than $2.00 per day. It would be well for the family to bring along their bathing suits as well for there is good swimming in the pool and plenty of time for recreation. If you are interested, write the Editor.

B'NAI B'RITH

William Thomas Kennedy, Jr., Minister

St. Luke Zion Methodist Church, Westfield

Text:Ephesians 2:12, "Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise having no hope, and without God in the world."

The traditional, historic Christian faith emphasizes to Christendom an active covenant relationship to God. The Bible from Genesis through Revelation alludes and realludes to God's covenants. The main instance of God's entry into human affairs signal a redemptive act on God's part and a subsequent offer of a covenant. God's covenants are His contracts with his chosen for their life and redemption.

The story of Israel as seen in the Old Testament tradition is the story of God acting for and with His chosen people. Early in Genesis He confronts Abraham with a promise, "In thy seed shall the nations be blessed. After the exciting intrigues at Egypt and the Red Sea, God offered the covenant to Israel based on his initial redemptive Act on the behalf of the people of Israel. Out of Sinai God cries, "I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of Bondage . . . . . "—"I will be your God and you will be my people . . . "—These are the wonderful words of life to the Jews in the Wilderness! In a great ceremony of blood and tears as well as testimony Israel accepted God's Covenant.

However, this covenant is expressingly and exclusively for the Jews. Not that the Jews chose Jehovah, but rather that Jehovah chose the Jews. Their choice was a response to God's redemptive act, that he has expressed in the covenant. God has already performed His end of the Covenant in the beginning of Exodus, but continued in the History of Israel, cradling her in the arms of his suppliant providence. God indeed kept His covenant in Israel to finally promise his presence in the Temple of Jerusalem.

The early prophets of Israel insist that all the nations were pagan except Israel. The covenant cemented Israel into a religious relationship with Jahweh, Jehovah, the Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. There are rich implications in Jewry's insistance that the only redemption for man is in the Lord's Covenant and only Jews are included.

Then according to Rabbinical thinking, (and justly so in early Judaism), the only way to be saved is to be a Jew, "in the nation of Israel," knowing the covenants of promise. For there is hope and the presence of God in the world.

Meanwhile, we cannot determine our national origin. If the foregoing is the case, and we had our way, I suppose we would all be born Jews. The fact of birth is important to the covenant. To come into the Old Testament covenant is to be born into it. This is a great compliment to all Israel, for only in Israel is one's national origin and his faith implicit in the same means of social identification. Hence, a Jew is born in a religious community of a separate, peculiar people, a nation of priests.

We are not Jews - - - hence not saved. How can we become Sons of the Covenant? - - Bnai Brith? From this perspective we may join Paul at the point of the text: "You were alienated from the nation of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

Even Old Testament prophecy endorses a Messiah who comes "to be a light to lighten the Gentiles." . . . "The New Testament Gospel is the good tidings of a New Covenant. We see Jesus as did Paul, opening the Covenant to the nations of the World. He stands at the communion table saying "This is my blood of the New Covenant given to and for you . . . "

Jesus Christ is the Messiah of God. He was sent to open the covenant. During God's redemptive act at calvary, down in Jerusalem, in the temple, the veil of the temple is torn in two. God was no longer withheld. The spectators and gentiles were allowed only to stand out in the nave and look in the sactuary while Jews worshipped God within the covenant. At the Cross, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

Again, God had taken the initiative to enter in human affairs. As he freed Israel from Egypt, He freed Israel and the world from sin and death. The victorious Christ having finished the work of opening the covenant gives a new Covenant. He can still command with His Father. "I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt (death) out of the house of bondage (sin)—therefore thou shalt have no other gods before me.

This is the covenant. It essentially has two parties (1) God, and (2) the community of believers. The Lord gave the Law, the Jews accepted it. The Lord gave Jesus, the Jews rejected him. John's

analysis of Jesus and the New Covenant epitomizes the affects of Jesus' ministry this way, "He went to His own and His own received Him not, but to them who believed He gave the power to become the Sons of God." This is Bnai Brith! God has chosen his people in Christ. He has chosen those who would receive and believe his son and take up his covenant of live and life.

One of the creeds of our faith declares that, "we believe in the church as the fellowship for worship and for service of all who are united to the living Lord."

In another we say, "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is one true Church, apostolic and universal. . . "

Those who are chosen by Christ must take up his covenant which is with the church. This is the community of believers to whom Jesus speaks. This is the holy nation, the peculiar people of God in Jesus Christ. God has made His covenant with the church and has kept his covenant. There is the Word of God, the sacraments and the fellowship of believers. Only the church has the gifts so essential to the Christian life and faith. It is no wonder an early churchman would write, "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it that he might himself have a glorious bride without spot or wrinkle."

We cannot rightly wink at a text like this, the writer here explicitly insists that Christ's atonement is exclusively for the church and the eschatogical fulfilling of His purpose is centered around the church. This is plainer to see when we understand that the Apostle has learned that the believing followers of Christ make up the community that has, through Christ, inherited God's Choice. The church is the covenant people that take the covenant and pledge to it obedience, praise and worship to God. The covenant has not changed, the two great commandments remain, love to God and love to neighbor. The initial redemptive act of God remains dependent upon divine volition and the completion of the covenant remains in the communities' response. Moreover, the means of entry by birth into the community remains. As in Israel and the old covenant, *one can only enter the church and the new covenant by Birth.*

Our Lord Jesus admonishes Nicodemus, "unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3). This is the initial occasion of the personal life leading to entering the covenant community. Man must have a new birth. God does not always encounter or confront men in the church. More often the decisive religious ex-

perience that leads to a new life is outside the church.

The important thing however, is that the impact of God's love in saving men charges the individual to respond to God's act of love by taking and accepting his covenant. God calls men out of the world from all walks of life. That heart-warming convicting experience may occur on the job or at home, in the street, or before the radio or television set. When God calls you through the Holy Spirit with an experience that makes you a believer this is God's offering the new covenant in Jesus Christ.

It is important to note that this covenant can only be accepted formally in the community of God's people in the church. A man once said to me, "Reverend, I am a Christian, but I don't belong to any church!" This is nonsense. A Christian has not taken up a covenant relationship with God till he has done so within the fellowship of God's chosen. Alienated from the church, you are "strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, without God in the world."

This is the experience that gives meaning to Baptism. One convicted of sin and desirous of a new life repents and is baptized into the Body of Christ which is the church. Infants of religious parentage are offered to the church in anticipation of God's covenant. For in either instance the covenant is already offered at the Cross, now man must accept at Baptism. After Baptism there is confirmation, where the believer promises faithfulness to his Baptism and formally joins the covenant community.

The church is the most important place on earth to the Christian. This is the way station that ministers to his soul's health. Here God is, his word is, his sacraments are. No wonder we sing so exhuberantly,

"I love thy Kingdom Lord,
The house of Thine abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood.

I love Thy Church, O God!
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on thy hand."

It is the sense of belonging in God's chosen commonwealth, (the church) fellowship with others who know the covenants of promise; and sharing the glow that comes with the imminent hope of everlasting

life and the Kingdom of God and the real presence of God for churchmen in the world that has kept the church the oldest institution in society. This is why Christians in churches everywhere, work, and sacrifice and suffer to keep their doors open. Why sainted children of God finally come to the place where their only pleasure in life is the church.

Thank God for the church! Thank God that in the church we are no longer outside God's promises of redemption and eschaton. It is wonderful that we do have hope and God in the world. In the living church God is working with and for us daily, forgiving sins, renewing minds, comforting, helping, healing, governing and guiding us, keeping us to a better day.

Finally, God contends with the world. Perpetually offering the covenant, even to sending the church out to tell the good news and bring new believers into the fellowship. But most men have not made the covenant with God. They go on rebelling against God, rejecting his son, loving their own lives, their own way; subject to none but their selfish desires. There they are: alien to Israel, strangers to the promises of God and without hope in the world.

Paul sees a final consummation exclusively for the church. He pictures the church as a glorious bride that has been waiting for Christ, the Bridegroom, to return in glory and honor, majesty and power. Here the world which rejects the covenant must face the wrath of God, but the true church joins the revelators' procession behind Christ their captain—"they who come up through much tribulation and washed their robes in the blood of the lamb."

What does this say to us?—It says we must love the church. We must keep it strong. With all its faults it is God's headquarters in the world for the salvation of men. The church must not languish! The world needs its succor now more than ever. Still its life lies in the believers that keep it alive.

"So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the Household of God." (Eph. 2:19). You are Bnai Brith!—Sons of Covenant.

The Connectional Council meets in Asheville, North Carolina, August 22nd while the Ninth World Conference of Methodism opens at Lake Junaluska August 27th.

EDITORIAL

The General Conference of 1956 is now a part of history and the Church finds herself girding for a rugged four years ahead. To say the least many delegates and visitors left Pittsburgh with dissatisfaction in their hearts. Others no doubt returned home as they have before, with *nary* a backward glance. The Editor knows that there is little need addressing himself to this second group. So, he speaks to the first.

We have had occasion to state since Pittsburgh that no real progress can ever be achieved without pain. Pittsburgh, instead of ending this travail, may have been its beginning. And the denomination may see greater differences of opinion in the years ahead than she envisions today.

But, and this to us is a hopeful sign, the Church has somehow weathered every storm to see the light of a brighter day. It was true in the first half of the 19th century and we believe it will be true again. Of course, as in every organization, the time will hardly come when we can expect peace and harmony throughout two weeks of legislation and debate. The General Conference will always have individuals who seek more their way than that of the denomination. It will always have members who hold little patience with these people. It will always have those who see failure around the corner. But painful as these cross-currents may be the keen observer is aware that the denomination is heading up into the storm and there will be no turning back.

Perhaps our grave concern today is in the fact that too few of us recognize that if the Church is to live she must not be stagnant. Changes will come and the wise man prepares himself for them. The Church is in the world and the controversies, traces of human development, political theories and general criticisms voiced here and there cannot but bring its bearing on the Church. Civil liberties so loudly announced must not only be a creed of the church but a part of that body as well. Churchmen who ignore this possibility commit a fatal mistake.

Pittsburgh, to this Editor, opened a new era that will be outstanding in the history of the denomination. While the casual spectator may not have observed it, the Conference was alert, suspicious, determined, critical. It was headstrong in that which it accomplished and prophetic in that which it shall do in years to come. It is our opinion that we have just begun to see great changes.

To the ministry of the denomination it is our feeling that we must readjust our outlook and aim in the light of these past events. We cannot meet change headon unless we are overzealous to false martyrdom. That which we teach on Sunday and preach the other days of the week must be reconciled to a greater pattern than selfishness. If we are leaders we must lead, being concerned to keep ahead of the followers in thought and action, for once the follower overtakes the leader there is no longer leadership.

We must re-examine our position as a church in the light of our goals, and those aims, those goals must become paramount. We must find a new awareness of our place in World Protestantism, and our responsibility in World Methodism. We must understand that our grave charge of providing Negro adulthood, not only as Christians but as Christian citizens of our Nation, cannot be delegated to small people or selfish politicians but must be divinely handled and divinely guided.

IN AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

In these days when cool languid breezes have a habit of making us lazy in movement most ministers find keeping the Church on an even keel rather hard. So many, now are vacation conscious and the contagion spreads even to those who stay at home. The result is that the Church who tries valiantly to carry some sort of spiritual program is put to it at 11:00 A. M. and finds the Vesper hour even harder to cope with.

Well, then, what about an audio-visual hymn sing? We place it this way for one firm on the Pacific Coast is now doing their hymns with sound recordings, so if the organist demands her vacation the minister is not at a loss.

Our Department of Christian Education gave me a fine opportunity to cull the nation for aids for congregation participation. While I must admit that there is still much to be desired a minister can very easily plan several different Vesper hours without using any duplications.. We should realize, however, that these devices should never be used more than three or four times a year. In fact I would recommend three such ventures, Christmas, Easter, and during such a time as this.

For those who wish a worship period to open such ventures I would highly recommend the first part of How and Why We Worship,

a filmstrip issued by the Christian Education Press. This filmstrip can be obtained from any Methodist Book Store. Church Screen Productions has issued another fine one called God of The Hills. Two others that we highly recommend, one for Lent and the other for Holy Week are: For God So Loved The World and The Last Week. In all of these full instructions for worship are to be found. Be sure, though that you recognize the great need for early review and preparation.

Among the hymn strips are the following: Christmas Carols, a fine opportunity at or during the Advent season, Great Hymns of the Church, a series to which you might turn for a Summer's Hour, and several single hymnstrips, such as Now The Day is Over, Faith of Our Fathers, The Lord's Prayer. I like too, S. V. E.'s Hymn of the Cross.

Our most recent addition has been the first of a series of Hymns of Praise by Spire Studios, a firm on the West Coast. Their work is supreme and while I have not had the opportunity to fully test the usefulness of their accompanying recordings it appears that they will be highly useful. The two we know that are immediately available are What A Friend We Have in Jesus and Glorious Things Are Spoken.

Filmslides are also available. We have used one glass slide, Praise to The Almighty. Anr you can even have your own set made up. We are doing just that.

Why not file any good idea on audio-visual aids away for future use? We do.

The Spring Conferences got off to a good start in some cases under new leadership as was true in the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference (Bishop Jones), New Jersey Conference (Bishop Shaw) and the Ohio and Indiana Conferences (Bishop Spottswood). In every case the new budget was raised. In the New England Conference we have seen few instances of the ease in which this was done. While we have no way of knowing just how the increase was taken on the grass roots level we have a deep feeling that an intensive bit of cultivation must be done very quickly. We agree with the Editor of the Star of Zion that the denomination courts disaster when it is so very close to its income. And while we are fully aware of the impelling need for finance in every department we have a companionate concern for the years ahead in the event of another recession or even a mild change in our economy. It is all too true that in no instance could any department or school continue its services more than a month or two without financial difficulty.